

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 133636

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: CASC (SMITH, HUNTER)

SUBJECT: KIDNAPPED AMERICANS: POSSIBLE VENUES FOR NEGOTIATION

1. DEPT. AGREES CONTINGENCY DIALOGUE ON POSSIBLE NEGOTIATION

VENUES IS USEFUL AND APPRECIATES IDEAS PUT FORTH REFTELS.

2. WITHOUT DISCOUNTING ANY OF POSSIBILITIES OUTLINED REFS A AND B, WE SEE IN THEM SEVERAL POTENTIAL DIFFICULTIES. SCENARIOS REQUIRING PRP NEGOTIATORS TO TRAVEL OUT OF THEIR HOME BASE WOULD RAISE FOR THEM OBVIOUS SECURITY RISKS. ANY SUCH TRAVEL, WHETHER TO TANZANIA OR BURUNDI OR EVEN TO
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BOAT ON LAKE, MIGHT BE VIEWED BY PRP AS POSING RISKS OF

ARRESTS OR HARM TO ITS NEGOTIATORS (EITHER EN ROUTE TO TALK SITE OR AT SITE ITSELF SHOULD TALKS BECOME STALEMATED OR BREAK DOWN) WHICH PRP WOULD NOT BE WILLING TO ACCEPT. AS SUGGESTED STATE 125823, ANY SUCH INCIDENT COULD HAVE SERIOUS NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR EFFORTS TO SECURE HOSTAGES' RELEASE OR FOR HOSTAGES THEMSELVES. TALK SITE LOCATED IN PRP REGION ZAIRE COULD LIKEWISE INVOLVE SERIOUS SECURITY RISKS FOR HOSTAGES'REPRESENTATIVES AND MIGHT NOT BE FAVORED BY PRP FOR FEAR OF EXPOSING THEIR WHEREABOUTS.

3. WE WOULD ASSUME THAT IN ANY SCENARIO INVOLVING TALKS OUTSIDE KIDNAPPERS' BASE AREA THE PRP WOULD REQUIRE FAIRLY COMPLETE ASSURANCES RE SAFE PASSAGE AND SECURITY FROM GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED. WOULD REMAIN TO BE SEEN, OF COURSE, HOW DIFFICULT IT WOULD BE TO OBTAIN SUCH ASSURANCES. BASED ON WHAT WE KNOW SO FAR (INCLUDING DAR ES - SALAAM 1952) THIS MIGHT NOT BE TOO MUCH OF A PROBLEM FOR GRB AND GOT. HOWEVER, PRP REQUIREMENTS MIGHT BE MORE DIFFICULT FOR ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT AND, AT A MINIMUM, MIGHT ENTAIL LENGTHY DIALOGUE WITH GOZ TO

WORK OUT SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS.

4. IN VIEW OF ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS, DEPT. BELIEVES WE SHOULD KEEP IN MIND POSSIBLE SCENARIO WHEREBY RELEASE OF STUDENTS MIGHT BE ACHIEVED VIA MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE AND TRUSTED INTERMEDIARY WHO WOULD SERVE AS SPOKESMAN FOR BOTH SIDES, MOVING BACK AND FORTH UNTIL NEGOTIATIONS COMPLETED. SUCH ROLE, FOR EXAMPLE, MIGHT BE PLAYED BY VAGNI OR PERHAPS BY YAKOBA ACROSS THE LAKE. THIS WOULD OBTAIN FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS BETWEEN KIDNAPPERS AND HOSTAGES' REPS WITH RISKS THAT THIS MIGHT ENTAIL FOR SAFETY OF BOTH. IT WOULD ALSO REDUCE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS OF GOZ'S HAVING TO EXTEND FORMAL ASSURANCES OF SAFETY DIRECTLY TO PRP DISSIDENTS, WITH GOVERNMENTS INSTEAD MAKING NON-INTERFERENCE PLEDGES TO THE INTERMEDIARY (AND POSSIBLY THROUGH HIM TO THE OPPOSING PARTIES). IT ALSO MIGHT BE MORE PALATABLE TO GOZ SINCE USE OF INTERMEDIARY WOULD PRESUMABLY RESULT IN LESS PUB-

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LICITY AND STATURE FOR PRP THAN WOULD BE THE CASE OF FORMAL, FACE-TO-FACE NEGOTIATIONS.

5. WE REALIZE THERE MAY BE NUMBER OF DISADVANTAGES AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS NOT READILY APPARENT FROM HERE IN POINTS CONTAINED PARA 4 ABOVE. THEY ARE PUT FORTH AT THIS POINT SOLELY FOR PURPOSE OF CONTINUING AND EXPANDING DIALOGUE ON THIS SUBJECT, AND WE WOULD APPRECIATE

ADDRESSEES' COMMENTS. HOWEVER, WE THINK THAT THIS TYPE

VENUE SHOULD BE HELD OPEN AS POSSIBLE OPTION AND, UNLESS ADDRESSEES SEE OBJECTION, THAT EMBASSY BUJUMBURA SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT VAGNI IS AT LEAST GENERALLY AWARE OF OUR THINKING ON THIS POINT BEFORE HE STARTS TRIP.

6. RE BUJUMBURA 406, WE AGREE THAT AT THIS TIME IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO PROCEED ON BOTH KIGOMA AND VAGNI

TRACKS. SUGGEST, THEREFORE, THAT VAGNI IN CONDUCTING HIS MISSION AVOID CONVEYING THE IMPRESSION TO KIDNAPPERS THAT WE VIEW HIM AS THE SOLE OR NECESSARILY THE PRE-FERRED CHANNEL FOR COMMUNICATION.
KISSINGER

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